

Management of Water in a Changing World: Lessons Learnt and Innovative Perspectives

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Keynote Presentation

IWRM indicators – experience from two global assessments

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Abstract

Over the past decade, substantial effort has been devoted to the identification and definition of simple and operational indicators that would capture the adoption and implementation of IWRM at national and at river basin level. This keynote presentation will present preliminary results from two ongoing global assessments on the status and progress towards integrated approaches to the sustainable management of water resources. The first assessment focuses on the national progress towards IWRM since the Rio Conference in 1992, whereas the second assessment attempts to establish a global baseline among transboundary river basins.

UN-Water, within its overall mandate of promoting sustainable use and management of water, has decided to produce a status report on the management of water resources for the UNCSO 2012 ("Rio+20") Conference and has asked UNEP to lead the process of developing the report. The report will focus on actual progress in the management of water resources across a broad range of countries. The CSO 2012 will mark 20 years after the Rio Earth Summit, 10 years after the Johannesburg Summit and 40 years after the Stockholm Conference. The 'Rio+20' summit thus provides a unique opportunity to boost the commitment from Governments and the international community to promote and implement integrated approaches to the sustainable management of water resources, as called for in Rio 1992 (Chapter 18 of Agenda 21) and in Johannesburg 2002 (the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation). Detailed questionnaires are presently being dispatched to all countries. Monitoring the application, outcomes and impacts of the application of integrated approaches to water resources management will form the backbone of the work. Furthermore, the process and report findings will contribute to the development of a permanent monitoring and reporting framework to promote more sustainable development and management of freshwater resources after 2012. And finally, the work will facilitate information exchange among UN agencies, national governments and civil society in a way that will enhance coherence and impact of the work of the UN at country level.

Currently there is no single global programme focusing on transboundary water assessment in the world. Except for a very limited number of transboundary water bodies, there is no regular monitoring or assessment programme, and baselines for assessing the health of these water bodies, or changes in them, have not been established. UNEP, in partnership with several other organizations, has recently completed a GEF (Global Environment Facility) funded Medium Size Project (MSP) on the *Development of the Methodology and Arrangements for the GEF Transboundary Waters Assessment Programme (TWAP)*. The TWAP MSP adds value to the array of existing and planned national, regional and international water assessment activities and programmes by developing a framework within which to produce an assessment of major transboundary water systems around the globe based on data and information generated by ongoing activities. The ability to undertake an assessment of the world's major transboundary water ecosystems depends on the wide array of existing regional and international research, monitoring, and assessment activities and initiatives around the globe. Therefore, the TWAP framework includes such institutions, frameworks and programmes, so that the assessment process can be sustained through these established bodies. A Full Size Project to implement the first assessment cycle based on the developed methodologies and partnerships is currently under consideration by the GEF.